

A. Owen Calhoon House
State Route 154
Victor
Monroe County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1215

HABS
MO
69-VICT,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

A. OWEN CALHOON HOUSE

HABS
MO69-VICT,
2-Location:

200 yards west of intersection of Paris-to-Louisiana Road with unnamed north-south road, 0.3 mile south of intersection of this unnamed road with State Route 154, 0.4 mile west of the South Fork of the Salt River, Victor, Monroe County, Missouri.

USGS Florida 7-1/2' Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 15.600560.4367520.

Present Owner:

United States of America, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District (August 1978).

Present Use:

Vacant. Located in the Clarence Cannon Dam and Reservoir Project Area.

Significance:

The A. Owen Calhoon House is a good example of the stylistic elaboration of the single-pen, one-and-a-half-story house type. As originally constructed, this house had a front cross gable of Gothic-cottage derivation. When the rear lean-to kitchen was removed, it was replaced by a long, one-and-a-half-story addition with flared gambrel roof. The resulting house, with its vertical proportions, its deep extent on the lot, and its peculiar roof profile, appears more characteristically urban than might be expected of a house in the crossroad village of Victor.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: circa 1886. The house is said to have been "new" when John W. Calhoon was born in 1888 (Mrs. Lorene Ricks).
2. Architect/builder: Unknown. It is reported that this was one of four similarly designed house built by the same person in the Victor area. (Mrs. Lorene Ricks).

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3. Original and subsequent owners: The A. Owen Calhoon House is located in the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 19, Township 54 North, Range 8 West. It is part of the land originally settled by Bennet Goldsberry in 1818. The following references are from the deed books in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Monroe County Courthouse, Paris, Missouri:

- 1876 Warranty Deed, June 3, 1876. Recorded in book 6, page 174. Sarah W. Long to Robert Calhoon. 120 acres for \$1500. This is the first Calhoon to occupy the land on which the house sits.
- 1889 Warranty Deed, October 19, 1889. Recorded in Book 31, page 116. Robert Calhoon et ux. to A.O. Calhoon. 120 acres for \$1500.
- 1926 Warranty Deed, March 8, 1926. Recorded in Book 86, page 464. Mary E. Calhoon to Maude M. Calhoon. One quarter acre for \$900.
- 1954 Sheriff's Deed, September 7, 1954. Recorded in Book 122, page 6. Sheriff Mark Bodine to Everett Francis et ux. One quarter acre for \$900 (loan default).
- 1957 Warranty Deed, November 30, 1957. Recorded in Book 126, page 178. Everett Francis et ux. to Arthur L. Bunnell. One quarter acre for \$1000.
- 1970 Warranty Deed, December 4, 1970. Recorded in Book 152, page 478. Mae Bunnell to United Staes of America. One quarter acre for \$6000.

4. Original construction: This frame house was originally three bays (one room) wide and two rooms deep on the first floor, with only one front room on the second. This bedroom over the parlor/sitting room was reached by a staircase ascending from the kitchen (rear room). Despite the awkward appearance, the lean-to kitchen was probably contemporary with the two-story section. Evidence of this is the ghost of a stair stringer under the plaster and wallpaper in the kitchen. The windows in the sides of the kitchen are identical to those in the front and sides of the parlor/sitting room. Matching wall paneling is found in both rooms, and the placement of the stove chimney in the south room indicates contemporaneous construction.

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The house originally had a front porch with a deck above. The porch had four posts and extended fourteen feet across the sixteen-foot facade.

The exterior was originally painted white. The trim was a yellow-gold color.

The upper parts of the original interior walls had a darkly stained, horizontal, beaded tongue-and-groove paneling. Beneath a chair rail were wainscots consisting of vertical boards.

There was a root cellar of limestone rubble construction twenty-two feet behind the house.

5. Alterations and additions: A. Owen Calhoon moved into the house in 1912 and added an 11'10" concrete slab to the rear (south) of the kitchen. It was probably at this time that the concrete front porch slab was constructed as well as the concrete walk from the porch to the road. In 1926 John W. Calhoon, brother of A. Owen, moved into the house with his sister, Maude, and his mother, Mary. John expanded the house in 1934-35, all the way to the once-separated root cellar (Mrs. Lorene Ricks, Miss Lily Calhoon). The addition included two rooms and a porch on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor. The addition was built on the pre-existing concrete slab. The old kitchen became a bedroom with dining room and new kitchen in the addition.

The space where the stairs were removed became a closet, and new stairs were constructed in the dining room ascending to the south now instead of to the north. One large and one small bedroom were created upstairs behind the original second-story bedroom. A door from the second-story rear bedroom led out to the roof of the root cellar, which served as a deck and exit. The back porch, at the southeast corner of the kitchen, served as the entrance to the root cellar, which was reinforced with concrete during this remodeling. Also, a concrete sidewalk from the side door in the new dining room was constructed to the front walk.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the House:

The Calhoon family was of commercial and social importance in and around the village of Victor. Like many of the settlers of the area, Robert Calhoon had come from Kentucky to the rich farmland

of Missouri. Robert and his son, Odell, as well as being farmers, were mentioned in an 1882 trade review as being the best blacksmiths in the county. Albert Odell (A. Owen's father) additionally was an inventor, beekeeper (selling honey nationally), scientist, mathematician and philosopher. A. Odell's house was adjacent to the blacksmith shop, which in turn was adjacent to the A. Owen Calhoon House. The Calhoon houses became in time a nucleus for the developing village of Victor.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: There is one view of the front facade, which shows the porch and balustrade, in the possession of Mrs. Lorene Ricks, Paris, Missouri. The date of the photograph is not known.

2. Bibliography:

- a. Primary Sources:

Blair, Mrs. Oneva, Paris Missouri. Personal interview, June 14, 1978. Mrs. Blair was the last resident of Victor and provided valuable information on the locations of structures in the village and on the history of the Calhoon family.

Booth, Mrs. Leta, Paris, Missouri. Personal interview, June 16, 1978. Mrs. Booth is related to the Calhoon family and provided information on the Calhoons.

Hunt, Karen (Platz). "Draft of Historic Archeological Resource Report," Clarence Cannon Reservoir Human Ecology Project, 1977.

Hunt, Karen (Platz) and Michael J. O'Brien. "National Register Nomination Form: A.O. Calhoon House." February 10, 1978. Copy in Washington, D.C., office of the National Register includes two photos, taken in February 1976. Nomination prepared in conjunction with the Historic Resource Survey, University of Nebraska, Cannon Reservoir Human Ecology Project, 1977.

Ricks, Mrs. Lorene and Calhoon, Miss Lily, Paris, Missouri. Personal interview, June 19, 1978. Mrs. Ricks was the wife of Harry W. Calhoon, brother of

A. Owen, and Lily is their daughter. Much of the history of the alterations and the persons responsible was obtained from this interview.

Thomas Hill and Descendants (no publisher or date). This book is in the possession of Mrs. Leta Booth, Paris, Missouri. It contains the Calhoon family genealogy.

b. Secondary Sources:

"Historical Supplement," Monroe County Appeal. February 7, 1882.

Obituary, A. Odell Calhoon, Monroe County Appeal. July 8, 1921.

Standard Atlas of Monroe County, Missouri (Chicago: George Ogle and Company, 1917).

Prepared by Travis C. McDonald
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
June 1978

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The house is an adaptation of a vernacular one-over-one, single-pen house with lean-to prevalent throughout the area. With the rear addition, it is a long, narrow one-and-a-half-story structure with an unusual roof profile.
2. Condition of fabric: Structural and exterior fabrics: Fair.
Interior finish: Poor (extensively vandalized)

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Original section: 16'3" (three-bay front) by 23'5".
Rear addition: 16'3" by 24'9".
Root cellar: 15'4" by 9'0".

2. Foundations:

Original section: continuous perimeter walls of dry-laid limestone taken from the Calhoon Branch of the South Fork of the Salt River. The stone was later covered with a coat of cement. A row of limestone piers runs east-west beneath the wall dividing the two first-floor rooms.

Rear addition: Built on a concrete slab, 1' thick.

3. Walls: Horizontal weatherboards (4-1/2" exposure) with plain corner boards on the exterior of both the original section and the rear addition, with octagonal-end shingles in the front cross gable. Siding, shingles, and trim are all painted white. The walls of the attached stone cellar have been partially coated with cement.
4. Structural system: Lightweight balloon framing using milled pine lumber for wall members and oak for the roof structure. (Studs and rafters: 2 x 4s, 24" on center; joists: 2 x 6s, 24" on center). Wire nails are used throughout the structure.
5. Porches: A 14'0" x 5'5" concrete pad is all that remains of the front porch. From this a narrow concrete sidewalk runs along the west wall of the house to the side entrance. At the rear, the top of the stone root cellar has been finished with concrete to form a small deck, reached by the second-floor rear door.
6. Chimneys: There are two brick stove chimneys, one located at the rear (south side) of the front room, the other (an interior chimney), at the south wall of the rear addition just west of the ridge.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Two doors, one on each story, are centered on the north (front) elevation of the building. The one on the first story has three molded panels beneath three vertical lights. There is a transom above. The second story door has four molded panels, the upper two being lights with rounded heads. Both doors have sloped drip caps with cyma recta bed molds. The door on the west side of the addition has the same panel and light arrangement as the first-story front door. There are two doors at the rear: a four-panel door on

the second floor, and a door with two lower panels and one large light at the back porch. All doorways are framed by plain exterior casings and jambs, with plain wood slip sills.

- b. Windows: Windows throughout the first floor are two-over-two, double hung, all with plain slip sills and sloped drip caps, some with cyma recta bed moldings under the caps. Windows on the upper floor are either two-over-two, double hung (at the gable ends of the original section) or inswinging casements (in the dormers of the rear addition). All windows are wood with plain trim.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof of the original portion is a moderately pitched gable, the ridge running parallel to the front facade, with a steeply pitched cross gable centered on the front. It is this configuration that shows the influence of the Gothic cottage house type. The roof of the rear addition is a gambrel with a slightly steeper top slope and flared eaves. The roof of the back porch is a low-pitched shed. Original wood shingles on all surfaces (excluding the small shed) are covered with asphalt shingles or sheets.
- b. Cornices: Plain frieze boards and soffits throughout.
- c. Dormers: There are two shed dormers on both the east and west sides--the one toward the front having one window, the one toward the rear, a pair of windows.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Cellar: Only a root cellar behind the southwest corner of the house.
- b. First floor: The first floor is essentially a progression of single rooms which extend the full width of the house, with the connecting doorways aligned at the centers of the dividing walls. The front doorway leads into the parlor/sitting room, and behind are a bedroom, the dining room, kitchen and the back porch. At the southwest corner of the house is a root cellar, partially below grade.

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- c. Second floor: Like the first floor, the second floor is a series of spaces--in this case three bedrooms--arranged one behind another.
2. Stairways: A single straight-run closet stair ascends from the southeast corner of the dining room into the rear bedroom.
3. Flooring: Flooring in the parlor/sitting room consists of plywood sheets laid over the joists (a replacement for the original floorboards). In the downstairs bedroom and the front and rear bedrooms upstairs flooring consists of 3-1/4" tongue-and-groove pine boards. In the middle bedroom upstairs, flooring consists of 13" to 15"-wide rough-sawn oak boards. In the first-floor rooms of the addition, the floors are trowel-finished concrete. Where linoleum sheets have been laid over wood floors, the floorboards have generally been painted around the perimeter.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior walls in the original front section have a sequence of finishes indicating a variety of owners. The original wall surface consisted of stained beaded-board paneling, placed vertically up to the chairrail and horizontally above. On top of the paneling were laid several layers of wallpaper, which were later covered with lath-and-plaster, and in turn papered and finally painted. Painted and/or papered lath-and-plaster or plasterboard walls are found throughout the rear addition. The ceilings in both the front and rear sections are either lath-and-plaster or plasterboard, painted and/or papered. The rear porch walls are finished with vertical beaded-board paneling, which has also been used on the ceiling. The root cellar has cement plastered over the stones.
5. Doorways and doors: All interior doors have been removed. Doorways and interior frames for the windows in the original section have molded pine casings with bull's-eye corner blocks, a feature common among buildings of this age in the area. Remaining hardware on the doors includes cast iron hinges and rimlocks (with porcelain knobs).
6. Decorative features and trim: Plain baseboards line the walls throughout the house.
7. Mechanical systems: The house has been serviced with electricity but has no indoor plumbing. Heating was by stoves. A cast iron floor grill in the front bedroom allowed heat to rise into the room from the parlor/sitting room below.

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D. Description of Site:

General setting and orientation: The Calhoon House is located in the rural village of Victor, forty-five feet south of the main thoroughfare through the village, the east-west Paris-to-Louisiana Road, and a hundred feet from where the road crosses the Calhoon Branch of the South Fork of the Salt River (see plan of Victor, HABS No. MO-1214). The site is flat in front of the house (to the north) and falls off gradually at the rear toward the Branch. Man-made features include a wire fence with wooden picket gate near the road, a concrete sidewalk running from the gate to the front stoop, a limestone retaining wall several feet from the east wall of the house, and a wood grape arbor to the west of the side entrance.

Outbuildings: The house is the easternmost building in a group of farm-related structures (barns, sheds, corn cribs, chicken coops, storage houses, etc.) owned by the Calhoon family. The privy is located behind the southwest corner of the house. 75' to the west of the house is the Calhoon Blacksmith Shop, now in ruins, and behind that is a frame barn. 250' west of A. Owen Calhoon's house is the house, also in ruins, of his father, A. Odell Calhoon.

Prepared by Clayton B. Fraser
Project Supervisor
Historic American Buildings
Survey
August 1978

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the St. Louis District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in compliance with Executive Order 11593, as a part of mitigation efforts connected with the construction of the Clarence Cannon Dam and Reservoir. HABS was engaged to document structures of cultural, historical, or architectural significance located within the Cannon Reservoir Project Area, in portions of Monroe and Ralls County, Missouri. The project was completed under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect. Recording was carried out during the summer of 1978 by Clayton B. Fraser, Project Supervisor; William T. Morgan (University of South Florida) and Travis C. McDonald (University of Virginia), Architectural Historians; Barbara A. Hendricks (University of Texas), Project Foreman; and Student Architects Dwight H. Burns (Texas Tech University), W. Michael Coppa (University of Virginia), Stephen H. Lauf (Temple University), and Michael K. Murdock (University of Texas). The data was edited in July 1979 by J.A. Chewning, Architectural Historian in the HABS Washington office. Photographs were taken by David J. Kaminsky in August 1978 and by William C. Haines between February and May 1979.